

Africa

Family Life

- Most men had many wives so they could have many children
- Often lived near aunts, uncles, cousins, grandparents
 - Clans: multiple families with a common ancestor
 - Tribe: two or more clans that share a common language, beliefs, and customs
 - Late led to city states
- Housing changed by region
 - Huts with thatch roofs
 - Clay
- Passed on their history
 - Story tellers: griots
 - Oral history
 - Often did not have a written language

Religion

- High god
 - Each area/region had a different story about god and how things came to be
- Animism: belief that all trees, rivers, rocks, and mountains contain a spirit
- Demonism: worship of demons
 - Witch doctors and spiritual leaders

Art Forms

- Storytelling
- Music
 - Sang over everything :all ceremonies, work, community events, recreation had songs that accompanied them
 - Instrumental
 - Drums
 - Talking drums: drumming language changed by adjusting the pitch of the strings on the drum allowing news to travel between villages that are miles apart
 - Rattles
 - Horns
 - Bells

- Dance
 - Ceremonial
 - Each ceremony had a specific dance
 - Some religious dances were designed to bring on demon possession
 - Celebratory
 - Marriage
 - Birth
 - Death
 - Victory in battle
 - Genders danced separately
- Sculpture
 - Figures
 - Designed to honor spirits
 - Idols
 - Charms to ward off evil spirits
 - Masks
 - Religious
 - Worn by witch doctors and dancers
 - During ceremonies, the wearer became the spirit or animal represented by mask
 - Not many examples of sculpture left
 - Some found in Benin
 - Bronze plaques used to commemorate life of the people

Architecture

- Not much left because of the quality of the building supplies
- Explorer from Portugal, Francisco Alvarez, discovered a Christian community in Ethiopia in 1520
 - Connected to the Coptic Church (similar to Roman Catholic or Eastern Orthodox)
 - Lalibela: king received a command from God to build 10 churches into solid rock
 - Biggest of these is the Church of the Redeemer of the World
 - Combines Byzantine, Greek, and Roman Architecture

Making a living

- Mostly farmers
 - Some groups were hunter/gatherers
 - Farm the ground until it was used up
 - Leave it alone for a few years and the nutrients would build back up into the soil allowing it to be farmable again
 - Chief of village would decide who farmed where
 - Women and children cleared the land
 - Women also were in charge of individual vegetable gardens
 - Children acted like the scarecrow to keep the birds away
- Some were herders keeping cattle, sheep and goats
- Craftsmen
 - Made goods
 - Tools
 - Weapons
 - Dishes
 - Containers
 - Baskets

African city states: tribes in western Africa formed joined together and defeated other tribes leading to small nation -states

Western Africa

Leading nation states included:

- | | | |
|---------|---|---|
| Ghana | } | 1. Positioned on trade routes |
| Mali | | 2. Caravan routes crossed the Sahara Desert ending at the Niger River |
| Songhai | | 3. This made these nations large and powerful |
4. Merchants from these nations acted as middlemen to get goods to the outside world of Asia and Europe

North African merchants wanted goods found only in the interior portions of Africa: (these things could be sold to Europe and Asia)

- 1) Gold
- 2) Ebony
- 3) Ivory
- 4) Spices
- 5) Animal hides
- 6) Slaves

Interior African nations wanted goods only the coastal regions could provide:

- 1) Salt
- 2) Cloth
- 3) Jewelry
- 4) Manufactured goods

Many merchants were Muslim and did whatever they could to spread Islam around the world.

Africans continued to practice many of the traditional ways of life in religion although they added Islam into their culture.

These Muslims brought reading and writing to Africa. This allowed African history to be recorded and remembered.

East Africa

Trading cities grew up in coastal regions

Goods from the interior were often brought to these cities for sale

People spoke Swahili: combination of Arabic, Persian, Portuguese, Hindi, and Bantu

They developed a city of government and trade

Coastal cities in East and West Africa were mixtures of many different countries

Interior countries and cities remained isolated from the world and held on to traditional African Culture until the coming of European explorers in the 19th century